

## 009: your year in coaching



**By Liz Hall**

Last year could go down as the year coaching started to grow up. Certainly many of you consider its survival as a main achievement of 2009 – and rightly so. Yet it was also the year coaches showed just how resourceful, creative, accepting of facts, collaborative and outward-looking they can be (see box 'What did we achieve in 2009?').

But what are your issues for 2010? Accreditation/standards/self regulation has leapt from 6 per cent of respondents last year to top place (44 per cent). It's followed by evaluation/ROI, interestingly down from 41 per cent to 33 per cent. This year, coaching as a change agent comes in joint second, a new entry in your top topics.

Coaching supervision is up one place to third (30 per cent compared to 25 per cent last year), followed by internal coaching up from fifth to fourth place, according to the 2009 Coaching at Work annual readers' survey. New in the top five topics is increased collaboration between professional bodies – many of you want more of it. Some, including Robert Garvey of Sheffield Hallam University, question the emphasis on ROI, but for many of you it's high on your coaching agenda.

For Jackie Keddy of Keddy Consultants, Coaching at Work's 2009 Person of the Year "robust evaluation and more emphasis on benefits and value for money" is one of her top three topics for 2010, along with "more focus on sustaining internal capability" and "coaching hybrid skills for managers". Kate Lanz of Sandler Lanz predicted an "increase in focus on short, sharp and goal-oriented coaching that is cost-effective".

Executive coach and supervisor, Joy Ferguson, urged coaches to ask the right questions: "There's lots of fantastic data that means we can articulate the ROI from coaching... if only we ask the right series of questions."

### Supervision

Ken Smith, founder of the Coaches in Government Network, said: "Supervision is a core part of the continuing debate around the professionalisation of coaching. There is a need for more and more affordable programmes of training in this and we need to look at how to derive a coaching-specific model of supervision that acknowledges but is sufficiently distinct from the therapeutic model."

Ferguson suggested coaches should take more responsibility for challenging poor/inadequate supervision when they come across it. "I've spoken to 'professional executive coaches' who either don't have any supervision, who only use their mates, or who still think it's fine to attend a large changing supervision group just a couple of times a year."

### Internal coaching

Line manager coaching effectiveness is one of the key topics for 2010 for the CIPD's learning and talent development adviser John McGurk: "We need to equip line managers to use coaching effectively and we need to dispense with the idea that this is a challenge to coaches. They will have a role as architects and consultants and of course close support for executives."

### Change enabler

Coaching as a change agent is an area many of you see growing over the next year. McGurk said: "The power of coaching as a change agent/agility enabler is the next big thing. We need a compelling integrated offer which is simple and understandable. We have coaching OD models which are still too theoretical. We need to get the value and insight out of these and turn them into a compelling set of tools and techniques, with internal coaches at the heart."

### Regulation

Barbara Moyes, independent coach and former head of learning and development at the Department of Health, said: "Regulation will probably gain in importance as coaching moves further towards becoming a profession, and seeks to create barriers to entry to exclude anyone who wants to call themselves a coach being able to practise."

### Overwhelmed buyers

For independent coach Sam Humphrey, addressing the overwhelm experienced by buyers is a burning topic. "As there are still many naive and uneducated coaching buyers, this has meant that coaching choices are being made on price alone. For people hoping to make a living as a coach, this is bad news."

### Collaboration

For Ed Parsloe, business director at the OCM Group, there is a need to harmonise global standards. "Achieving a global consensus on standards that is all-encompassing and long-lasting will help create stability within the industry. The current state of flux is not sustainable, even more so during adverse economic conditions. The last two will hold more sway this year as companies look to reduce costs on externals and ensure high-quality interventions are being delivered.

"I really hope that those in positions of influence will forget their differences, theoretical or political, and work together for the development of the industry as a whole. We are stronger united."

### What did we achieve in 2009?

Your top six:

1. Survival.
2. Greater collaboration between professional bodies, including on the four-body Supervision Steering Group (SSG) and the AC's survey on the impact of the recession with EMCC and ICF.
3. Increased understanding and acceptance of coaching supervision.
4. Greater emphasis on accreditation, including individual accreditation (the EMCC's launch of its EIA).
5. More internal coaches.
6. Growth in evidence base for coaching/more research, eg, Frank Bresser's global coaching survey, the hosting of the second International Coaching Research Forum in London and the Training & Skills Council's research into the key needs and drivers of coaching and mentoring in England.

### Other achievements:

- Increased impact of coaching on economy and climate change.
- More robust training courses.
- Increased emphasis on aligning coaching offers with the business agenda.
- Coaching increasingly seen as a key part of line managers' role.
- Coaching at Work going independent.
- Coaching in 90 per cent of organisations (CIPD Taking the Temperature survey).
- AC becoming a global organisation.
- Mentoring having a place alongside coaching.
- Creating a coaching culture and becoming mainstream.
- Rebalancing the emphasis of coaching from development to performance.
- Greater knowledge in public and organisations about coaching in Ireland.
- Enabling of managers to manage more effectively, taking away some of the closed-shop mystique and bringing in practical experience.

### Your top issues for 2010 - (%)

Accreditation/standards/self regulation – **44**

Evaluation/ROI/VFM - **33**

Coaching as change agent - **33**

Coaching -**30**

Internal coaching - **26**

Increased collaboration among professional bodies - **15**

Coaching in the wider community - **15**

Aligning coaching with business agenda – 7

Raising profile of coaching for tough times - 7

Coaching for performance improvement - 7

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